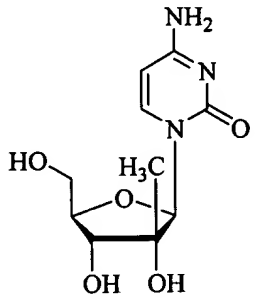
This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

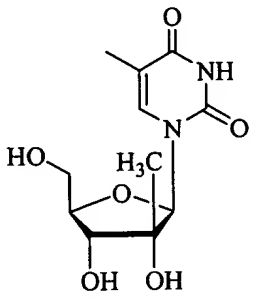
Claims 1-99 (cancelled)

Claim 100 (currently amended): A method for the treatment of a Hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising administering an antivirally effective amount of a β-D nucleoside compound of the structure:



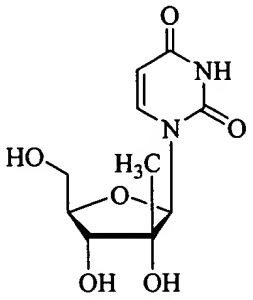
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or prodrug thereof, optionally in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent.

Claim 101 (currently amended): A method for the treatment of a Hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising administering an antivirally effective amount of a β-D nucleoside compound of the structure:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or prodrug thereof, optionally in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent.

Claim 102 (currently amended): A method for the treatment of a Hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising administering an antivirally effective amount of a β-D nucleoside compound of the structure:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or prodrug thereof, optionally in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent.

Claims 103-129 (canceled)

Claim 130 (currently amended): The method of any one of claims ~~83, 86, 89, 90,~~ 100, 101, 102, or ~~140-145~~ 140-152, wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable carrier is suitable for oral delivery.

Claim 131 (currently amended): The method of any one of claims ~~83, 86, 89, 90,~~ 100, 101, 102, or ~~140-145~~ 140-152, wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable carrier is suitable for intravenous delivery.

Claim 132 (currently amended): The method of any one of claims ~~83, 86, 89, 90,~~ 100, 101, 102, or ~~140-145~~ 140-152, wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable carrier is suitable for parenteral delivery.

Claim 133 (currently amended): The method of any one of claims ~~83, 86, 89, 90,~~ 100, 101, 102, or ~~140-145~~ 140-152, wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable carrier is suitable for intradermal delivery.

Claim 134 (currently amended): The method of any one of claims ~~83, 86, 89, 90,~~ 100, 101, 102, or ~~140-145~~ 140-152, wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable carrier is suitable for subcutaneous delivery.

Claim 135 (currently amended): The method of any one of claims ~~83, 86, 89, 90,~~ 100, 101, 102, or ~~140-145~~ 140-152, wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable carrier is suitable for topical delivery.

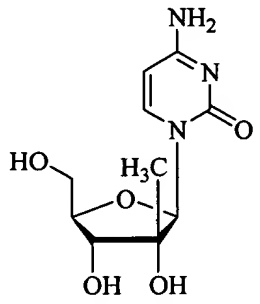
Claim 136 (currently amended): The method of any one of claims ~~83, 86, 89, 90,~~ 100, 101, 102, or ~~140-145~~ 140-152, wherein the compound is in the form of a dosage unit.

Claim 137 (previously presented): The method of claim 136, wherein the dosage unit contains 10 to 1500 mg of the compound.

Claim 138 (previously presented): The method of claim 136, wherein the dosage unit is a tablet or capsule.

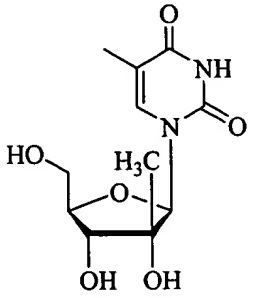
Claim 139 (currently amended): The method of any one of claims ~~83, 86, 89, 90,~~ 100, 101, ~~or~~ 102, or 146-152 wherein the host is a human.

Claim 140 (currently amended): A method for the treatment of a Hepatitis C virus infection in a human, comprising administering an antivirally effective amount of a β-D nucleoside compound of the structure:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof.

Claim 141 (currently amended): A method for the treatment of a Hepatitis C virus infection in a human, comprising administering an antivirally effective amount of a β-D nucleoside compound of the structure:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof.

Claim 142 (currently amended): A method for the treatment of a Hepatitis C virus infection in a human, comprising administering an antivirally effective amount of a β-D nucleoside compound of the structure:

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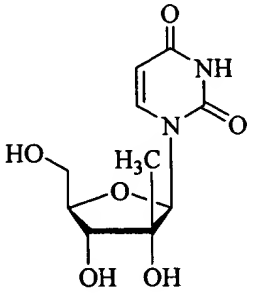
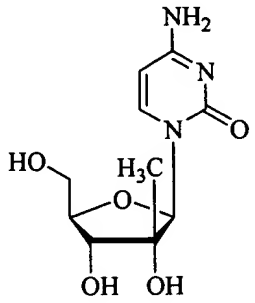


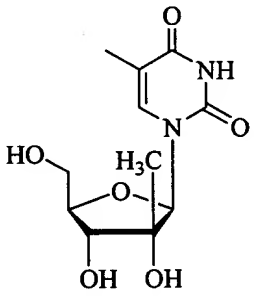
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof.

Claim 143 (currently amended): A method for the treatment of a Hepatitis C virus infection in a human, comprising administering an antivirally effective amount of a β-D nucleoside compound of the structure:



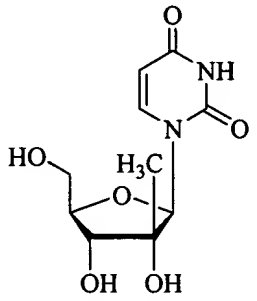
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, optionally in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

Claim 144 (currently amended): A method for the treatment of a Hepatitis C virus infection in a human, comprising administering an antivirally effective amount of a β-D nucleoside compound of the structure:



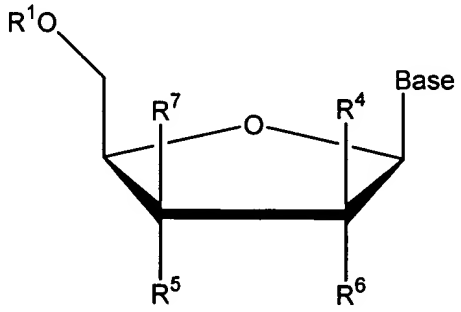
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, optionally in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent.

Claim 145 (currently amended): A method for the treatment of a Hepatitis C virus infection in a human, comprising administering an antivirally effective amount of a β-D nucleoside compound of the structure:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, optionally in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent.

Claim 146 (new): A method for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising administering an anti-virally effective amount of a β-D nucleoside compound of formula:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, optionally in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent, wherein:

Base is a pyrimidine base;

R^1 is independently H; phosphate; stabilized phosphate prodrug; acyl; alkyl; sulfonate ester and benzyl, wherein the phenyl group is optionally substituted with one or more substituents; a lipid; an amino acid; a carbohydrate; a peptide; a cholesterol; or other pharmaceutically acceptable leaving group which when administered *in vivo* is capable of providing a compound wherein R^1 is independently H or phosphate; and

R^4 is alkyl, alkynyl, -C(O)O(alkyl), -C(O)O(lower alkyl), -O(acyl), -O(lower acyl), -O(alkyl), -O(lower alkyl), -O(alkenyl), halogen, NO_2, NH_2, -NH(lower alkyl), -NH(acyl), -N(lower alkyl)$_2$, -N(acyl)$_2$; and

R^5 and R^6 are independently OR^1, hydroxy, alkyl, azido, cyano, alkenyl, alkynyl, Br-vinyl, -C(O)O(alkyl), -C(O)O(lower alkyl), -O(acyl), -O(lower acyl), -O(alkyl), -O(lower alkyl), -O(alkenyl), chlorine, bromine, iodine, NO_2, NH_2, -NH(lower alkyl), -NH(acyl), -N(lower alkyl)$_2$, -N(acyl)$_2$;

R^7 is H, alkyl, chlorine, bromine, or iodine; and

X is O, S, SO_2, or CH_2.

Claim 147 (new): The method of claim 146, wherein the pyrimidine base is selected from the group consisting of thymine, cytosine, 5-fluorocytosine, 5-methylcytosine, 6-aza-pyrimidine, including 6-azacytosine, 2- and/or 4-mercaptopyrmidine, uracil, 5-halo-uracil, C^5-alkylpyrimidines, C^5-benzylpyrimidines, C^5-halopyrimidines, C^5-vinyl-pyrimidine, C^5-acetylenic pyrimidine, C^5-acyl pyrimidine, C^5-hydroxyalkyl purine, C^5-amidopyrimidine, C^5-cyanopyrimidine, C^5-nitropyrimidine, or C^5-aminopyrimidine.

Claim 148 (new): The method of claim 146, wherein R^4 is methyl, and R^5 and R^6 are hydroxyl.

Claim 149 (new): The method of claim 146, wherein the compound is in the form of a dosage unit.

Claim 150 (new): The method of claim 146, wherein the compound is in substantially pure form.

Claim 151 (new): The method of claim 146, wherein the compound is at least 90% by weight free of the β-L-isomer.

Claim 152 (new): The method of claim 146, wherein the compound is at least 95% by weight free of the β-L-isomer.

Claim 153 (new): The method of claim 146, wherein R^4 is alkyl.

Claim 154 (new): The method of claim 146, wherein R^5 is hydroxy.

Claim 155 (new): The method of claim 146, wherein R^6 is hydroxy.

Claim 156 (new): The method of claim 146, wherein R^7 is H.

Claim 157 (new): The method of any one of claims 100-102 or 140-145, wherein the compound is at least 90% by weight free of the β-L-isomer.

Claim 158 (new): The method of any one of claims 100-102 or 140-145, wherein the compound is at least 95% by weight free of the β-L-isomer.

Claim 159 (new): The method as in any one of claims 100-102 or 145-150, wherein the compound is in substantially pure form.